

# TELEGRAM INFORMATION REPORT TELEGRAM

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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COUNTRY SOUTH VIETNAM

REPORT NO.

SUBJECT

THICH TRI QUANG'S DISSATISFACTION OVER  
PUBLISHED STATEMENTS BY AMERICAN OFFICIALS  
AND HIS INDICATION OF A CONTINUATION OF  
THE BUDDHIST STRUGGLE

DATE DISTR. 3 AUGUST 1963

EO 12958 3.4(b)(1) > 25Yrs

PRECEDENCE ROUTINE

(C)

DATE OF  
INFO.

REFERENCES

IN 91727

PLACE &  
DATE ACQ.

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APPRAISAL

SEE BELOW

FIELD REPORT NO.

THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION. SOURCE GRADINGS ARE DEFINITIVE. APPRAISAL IS TENTATIVE.

SOURCE

APPR

IT IS PROBABLY TRUE THAT THICH TRI QUANG AND OTHER BUDDHIST LEADERS ARE UPSET OVER CRITICISMS OF THEIR DISPUTE AS CONTAINED IN PUBLISHED PRESS STATEMENTS FROM AMERICAN OFFICIALS. CONCERNING THICH TRI QUANG'S REFERENCES TO AMBASSADOR NOLTING'S INTERVIEW, SEE COMMENT, PARA. 2B. THE REMAINDER OF THE REPORT IS PROBABLY TRUE.

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THIS REPORT HAS BEEN CLEARED WITH AMBASSADOR FREDERICK E. NOLTING, JR.

1. SUMMARY. THICH TRI QUANG, CHIEF OF THE CENTRAL VIETNAM SECTION OF THE GENERAL ASSOCIATION OF VIETNAMESE BUDDHISTS, PROCEDED ON 30 JULY 1963 THE PUBLISHED STATEMENTS OF VARIOUS AMERICANS, AND ASSERTED THAT HIS BUDDHIST DISPUTE WAS RELIGIOUS, NOT POLITICAL. HE INDICATED THAT FURTHER SELF-SACRIFICES WERE PROBABLE SINCE THE GOVERNMENT HAD NOT CEASED HIS PERSECUTION OF THE BUDDHISTS. HE FURTHER IMPLIED THAT HE WAS THE AUTHOR OF BUDDHIST MATERIAL BEARING THE NAME OF THICH TINE KHET, PRESIDENT OF THE GENERAL ASSOCIATION OF VIETNAMESE BUDDHISTS.

2. THICH TRI QUANG MADE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS:

A. HE IS THOROUGHLY DISSATISFIED WITH THE TENOR OF STATEMENTS AND PRESS RELEASES BY VARIOUS AMERICAN OFFICIALS AND ORGANIZATIONS.

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GROUP 1  
Excluded from automatic  
downgrading and  
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STATE/INR	DIA	ARMY/ACSI	NAVY	AIR	JCS	SECDEF	NSA	NIC	AID	USIA	OCI	ONE	OCR	ORR	OBI	OO
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MENTIONING SPECIFICALLY A RELEASE IN THE TIMES OF VIETNAM WHICH STATED THAT THE BUDDHIST STRUGGLE HAD BECOME POLITICAL IN NATURE. HE ASSERTED THAT HE HAD TRIED TO KEEP THE DISPUTE ON A PURELY RELIGIOUS BASIS.  COMMENT. THE TIMES OF VIETNAM

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PUBLISHED ON 25 JULY A UNITED PRESS INTERNATIONAL (UPI) ARTICLE QUOTING U.S. DEFENSE DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS AS STATING THAT THE BUDDHIST RELIGIOUS STRUGGLE WAS IN FACT A POLITICAL FIGHT INITIATED BY THE ENEMIES OF THE DIEM REGIME.) HE RECOGNIZES THAT MOST AMERICANS MISUNDERSTAND THE TRUTH ABOUT SOUTH VIETNAM AND ESPECIALLY ABOUT THE BUDDHIST DISPUTE; THEY ARE ONLY FAMILIAR WITH THE OUTWARD APPEARANCE OF THE COUNTRY. HE CONCLUDED BY STATING THAT PERHAPS THE AMERICANS "HAVE OTHER INTENTIONS IN REGARD TO SOUTH VIETNAM" BUT DID NOT CLARIFY THIS REMARK.

B. MANY BUDDHISTS HAVE COMPLAINED ABOUT THE STATEMENTS OF <sup>JR.</sup> U.S. AMBASSADOR FREDERICK E. NOLTING/TO A UPI CORRESPONDENT, WHICH ASSERTED THAT THE BUDDHIST DISPUTE WAS POLITICAL RATHER THAN RELIGIOUS IN NATURE. HE TOOK EXCEPTION TO AMBASSADOR NOLTING'S STATEMENT THAT HE HAD SEEN NO EVIDENCE OF RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION IN VIETNAM. HIS MAIN OBJECTION TO THE INTERVIEW WAS THAT IT WAS SIMILAR TO THE STATEMENT BY PRESIDENT DIEM AND FOLLOWED THE LATTER ALMOST IMMEDIATELY. HE ASSERTED THAT THE AMBASSADOR'S STATEMENT WAS COMPLETELY CONTRARY TO THE FACTS.  COMMENT.

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THE 28 JULY ISSUE OF THE TIMES OF VIETNAM QUOTED AMBASSADOR

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NOLTING AS STATING THAT HE HAD NEVER SEEN ANY EVIDENCE OF RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION IN SOUTH VIETNAM AND THAT, ON THE CONTRARY, THERE APPEARED TO BE A GREAT DEAL OF RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE AMONG THE PEOPLE. THE AMBASSADOR WAS FURTHER REPORTED TO HAVE SAID THAT THE BUDDHIST CRISIS HAD TENDED TO OBSCURE THE GOVERNMENT'S ACHIEVEMENTS IN ITS WAR AGAINST THE COMMUNISTS. THE INTERVIEW CONTAINED NO STATEMENT TO THE EFFECT THAT THE BUDDHIST DISPUTE WAS POLITICAL IN NATURE. PRESIDENT DIEM'S INTERVIEW WITH UPI WAS PUBLISHED IN THE 29 JULY ISSUE OF THE TIMES OF VIETNAM).

C. BUDDHISTS IN CENTRAL VIETNAM HAD BEEN ADVISED TO LISTEN TO THE VOICE OF AMERICA (VOA) BECAUSE OF THE IMPARTIALITY OF VOA BROADCASTS; THESE INSTRUCTIONS WILL BE CHANGED, HOWEVER, BECAUSE OF THE STATEMENTS OF VARIOUS AMERICAN OFFICIALS.

D. DESPITE INSTRUCTIONS ISSUED TO BUDDHISTS IN 17 PROVINCES OF CENTRAL VIETNAM THAT ONLY MEMORIAL SERVICES WOULD BE HELD FOR QUANG DUC ON 30 JULY, DEMONSTRATIONS WERE ORGANIZED IN HUE, NHA TRANG, AND DALAT, WITH THE LARGEST IN HUE. IN ADDITION, MOST OF THE SHOPS REMAINED CLOSED.

E. HE REITERATED STATEMENTS MADE ON EARLIER OCCASIONS THAT THE BONZES AND NUNS WOULD CONTINUE THE FIGHT; IF THE GOVERNMENT DESIRES HARMONY WITH THE BUDDHISTS, IT MUST PROVIDE SOME EVIDENCE OF ITS SINCERITY. IN RESPONSE TO A COMMENT THAT THE CRISIS MAY HAVE REACHED ITS PEAK, HE SAID THAT THIS WAS UNTRUE, AND THAT

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THE DISPUTE HAD IN FACT BECOME MORE SERIOUS, WITH INCREASED USE OF TERRORISM BY THE GOVERNMENT. HE ADDED, HOWEVER, THAT IT WAS OTHERS IN THE GOVERNMENT RATHER THAN THE PRESIDENT WHO WERE CONTINUING THE PERSECUTION OF THE BUDDHISTS. THERE WILL BE ADDITIONAL SELF-SACRIFICES, ALTHOUGH THE INTERSECT COMMITTEE FOR THE DEFENSE OF BUDDHISM HAS NOT SANCTIONED ANY. FIVE PERSONS HAVE VOLUNTEERED IN WRITING, TWO NUNS, TWO MONKS AND A BUDDHIST LAYMAN, WHO WAS ONE OF THE WOUNDED WAR VETERANS WHO DEMONSTRATED AT XA LOI PAGODA ON 23 JULY. THESE PEOPLE ARE DETERMINED TO SACRIFICE THEMSELVES. OTHERS ARE ALSO READY, BUT THEY HAVE NOT INDICATED THEIR WILLINGNESS IN WRITING. FURTHER GOVERNMENT TERRORISM COULD INFLUENCE THE INTERSECT COMMITTEE TO AUTHORIZE THE REQUEST SELF-SACRIFICES.

F. A 30 JULY PROCLAMATION AND A 30 JULY LETTER, BOTH BEARING THE SIGNATURE OF THICH TINH KHIET/AND EXPRESSING THE BUDDHIST INTENT TO CONTINUE THEIR RELIGIOUS STRUGGLE UNTIL FULL REALIZATION OF THEIR DEMANDS WAS ACHIEVED, WERE ACTUALLY PREPARED BY QUANG. KHIET HAS REMAINED IN XA LOI PAGODA SINCE 12 JUNE, CONTRARY TO GENERAL BELIEF.

3. FIELD DISSEM. STATE ARMY NAVY AIR USMACV MAAG AID USIA  
2ND AIR DIV 9TH FLD STA CINCPAC PACFLT ARPAC PACAF.

END OF MESSAGE

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